

The Omen



The Omen

Volume 7, Number 9
April 5, 1996

*** EDITORS ***

Jonathan Land.....Managing Editor
Ben Sanders.....Production Editor
Stephanie Cole.....News Editor
Dave Wilcox.....Graphics Editor
Josh Brassard.....Section Hate Editor
Amber Cortes.....Music Editor

STAFF

Lauren Ryder.....Typing Abuse
Some Chick in Dakin.....Printer Abuse
Gillian Andrews.....Proofreading Abuse
Casey Nordell.....?????

CONTRIBUTORS

Gillian Andrews
Bahati Bonner
Matthew Flaming
Ben Sanders

“I wish you luck with a capital ‘F’”
-Elvis Costello

CONTENTS

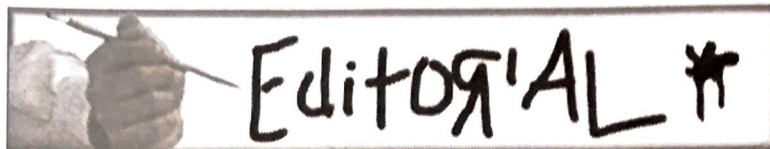
Page 3.....Pork-a-dork-a-doo	Page 6.....All Community Bloodbath
Page 4.....A Letter To The Community	Page 8.....A Retraction From Josh
Page 5.....More On Unionization	Page 10.....Generation X - A to Z

Policy Box!

The Omen accepts from any member of the Hampshire community. We will not edit anything you write, as long as you are willing to be responsible for what you say. Libel, which we personally find amusing and entertaining for countless hours is just not able to be printed in this forum.

Submissions, which includes just about anything involving the Hampshire community in some way (news, opinions, artwork, etc.), are due on Saturday nights at 8:00 to the editor of the section in which you wish to appear, or to Ben Sanders (E-307, box 710), or Jonathan Land (E-311, box 527). We prefer submissions on disk (IBM or HIGH DENSITY Macintosh), although hard copy (on paper, dumbass) is okay as well. Label your stuff well and it will make it back to you with no problem.

So give us your news, commentary, short fiction, comics, satire, poetry, art, bulletins, questions, and anything else you can think of, and your beloved community rag will dish it back 700 times. What better way to be heard?



Piggity-iggity-ork Rib

Boneless BBQ Flavored Pork Rib:

Ingredients: Pork, Sugar, Salt, Tomato Powder, Onion Powder, Garlic Powder, Smoke Flavoring, Malic Acid, Molasses, Monosodium Glutamate, Spices, Paprika, Citric Acid, Spice Extractives, Sodium Nitrate, Brown Sugar.

Color: Creamy Orange
Purchased at: ???

Produced by: Heartland Originals.

So have you ever seen that dogfood that has big bits of meat in it and it looks like it might actually taste good? If dog food had a barbecue flavor it would probably taste kinda like this stuff. Unfortunately, Boneless BBQ Flavored Pork Rib doesn't even look as attractive as dog food. And to top that off, it smells even worse. We had to roll down all the windows in the car on the way back from the store. In fact, I couldn't finish it, and the smell so repulsed everyone else in the car that they refused to even try it. In the end, we threw it at a frat guy in the parking lot. To sum, don't even think about trying one of these thing. Stick to Wild Bill's Original Jerky Chew.

Ben Sanders
Stunt Meat Reviewer



Thanks, Ben. I know what you're all thinking. You're thinking, "Why didn't Jon review this? Is it a Jew thing? I thought he was areligious? What kind of crap are you trying to pull here?" etc.

Frankly pork in big chunks just grosses me out. Same with seafood, so you won't be seeing me reviewing crab or lobster sticks either.

Now, I bet you're asking yourself the question, "Hey, Jon, don't I see you with a huge plate of bacon every weekend at SAGA?"

Yes, Assface, you do. (I'm sorry, if I was too abusive there, I won't do it again, I was out of line)

It's some weird psychological thing. Little strips of pork: GOOD. Big hunks of pork: BAD. Especially in the chop format.

I did have some experience with this product though. When I was plowed out of my mind this past Saturday (on moldy cheese, of course) I beat myself repeated on the head with it. It was tough, yet soothing. It had a very massaging, relaxing effect.

Now that I've scanned it in, I have no more use for it, so: OMEN CONTEST!!! The first one who writes or calls me, gets it. Good luck! Jonathan Land

Josh Brassard, Alex Georges, And You

A letter to the Hampshire "community"

Josh Brassard. Love him or hate him, you read him. Every week his Section Hate article makes some impression on you. And from the things that I've been hearing, in recent weeks, that impression has been negative.

Josh's stance on the case of Alex Georges was harsh. He admitted this. He even admitted that his original stance was harsher. But, through communication and debate with people who had more information than he himself had, Josh Brassard was convinced to change his mind.

I was fortunate enough to be present for some of these debates, and one of the things that came out startled me. There are over a thousand students on this campus, and only *one* of them contacted Josh. About anything. Josh Brassard has been writing for the Omen for two years now, and no-one has anything to say about him. Well, that's not quite true. If I'm judging the rumors right, a lot of you think he's an asshole. But I would rather deal with him then with you, any day of the week.

Josh Brassard takes a stand publicly, then challenges you, the Hampshire "community" to respond. To prove that you actually think about things. And no-one takes him up on it. He faithfully publishes his box number and his e-mail address, and then goes home and (in Josh's

words) "writes in a vacuum". Because you *don't* respond. You go to Saga or your hall or your mod and you bitch. You talk about what an asshole Josh is, and how dumb and insensitive and whatever he is; then you go and file your Div. II on how you, as a responsible Hampshire weenie, are going to change the world.

The world is only going to change if you leave your hall or your mod and change it. But if all you get off on is thinking about it, the world is going to remain as fucked-up as it is now, no matter deep your Div. II retrospective is.

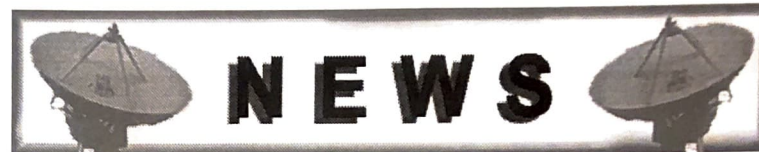
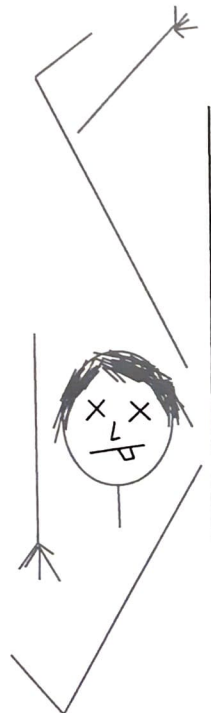
Did you know that every letter that a TV network receives is considered to be representative of one thousand viewers? Every phone call; *ten thousand*? That in the so-called "Republican Revolution" of 1994 something like 33% of registered voters bothered to show up? I know, you don't care. That's fairly obvious. Look at the results. Let me hear you bitch about Newt one more time.

I admire Josh Brassard. I think he was wrong, and I've told him so. But he cared enough about you to put himself out there to get shot down. He put himself out there as a way of inspiring debate; and love him or hate him, he has. It's really a shame that only one student, out of a thousand or so, cared enough to take the time to make a phone call. Cared enough to accept his challenge. And it's a damn shame that

none of you really have the time to change the world. You're all too busy bitching about it.

Bahati E. Bonner
FY 91
Box 48

Doesn't It Suck To Be Dismembered?
Jonathan Land,
1996



More On The Public Safety's Unionization Attempts

When Chuck Zerby, a switchboard operator with fifteen years of service at Hampshire under his belt, read the Hampshire College diagnostic known as the Romney Report, he took offense at a comment found on page 22 of that document. "Staff [should] make every effort to note and speak about the positive aspects of working at Hampshire," a recommendation ran, "[and should] interrupt the rumor mill and the spirit of negativity when they see it in themselves or one another."

"It makes it sound like we'll sit around and pluck negativities out of our hair like lice," he commented, questioning whether this type of effort would be an exercise in positive thinking, or, more likely, a method of thought control designed to sweep the grievances of Staff under the rug. In an interview with the Hampshire Omen, Zerby made it clear that this type of solution was not the answer to the growing problems he perceives as Hampshire tries to smooth over the increasing worker dissatisfaction on Staff. Declaring outright that the ultimate resolution to the situation would lead to the invocation of a

Union, or Unions, at Hampshire, Zerby presented his ideas in an organized, pragmatic fashion. Honing his analysis into three precise areas, he went on the record directing his comments at the Staff situation as a whole, leaving his personal grievances well out of the process.

His primary concern was one of job security for the Staff. Currently, the employment agreements binding Staff to the college leave ample room for immediate firing without justification. This, taken with diminishing salaries (in light of inflation) and a loss of benefits, had led the Staff to feel insecure about their jobs and perceived value at the college. "Lots of Staff are making less than \$17,000—an obscenity."

Step raises, a system of salary increase based upon seniority, have been terminated. Vacation carryover is gone. Unlimited sick leave, a part of job security, has been eliminated. And with the Budget Task Force bent on trimming \$500,000 from the school's budget, it would seem that no relief is imminent.

"The Staff requested repre-

sentation on the Board of Trustees," Zerby said, "and was told that the president can represent them." Lack of representation has led to Staff feeling "tertiary." And while Zerby concedes that Staff might be more easily replaced than Faculty, he termed this fact as "the definition of exploitation." Zerby is vehement about the vital role of Staff at the College. "If the professors were gone," he mentioned, "the students could possibly instruct themselves. But if the toilets weren't cleaned—the college would be shut down in a week."

But the atmosphere Zerby perceives behind these problems is one he termed as a "shrinking pie," sliced in new and creative ways that preserve or increase the boons to Faculty and Administration, while the Staff is dolled a declining proportion of what's left. Citing a more amenable sabatival policy for faculty, the creation of the Vice President's office, and the amount of time and energy utilized for the "Romney Report" (said report being an extended exploration of problems at the college conducted by a faculty member), Zerby found

Continued on page 10.

All-Community Free-for-All

An estimated 200 students, the largest number to attend an all-community meeting in recent Hampshire history, gathered in the East Lecture Hall of Franklin Patterson Hall last Tuesday to discuss campus safety, student governance, the search for a new dean of students, ACC, and financial aid. In addition, they listened to a very positive "state-of-the-college" address given by Greg Prince.

ACC

The meeting began with a brief reintroduction to the purposes of Community Council and quickly segued into a discussion of ACC, everybody's favorite telephone service. Despite the prominence of the phone company on the list of topics discussed at the meeting, and the availability of an ACC representative, there was no representative present as one was not invited.

Still, myths about ACC were quickly established and done away with. Tuition was not raised \$2000 per student for phone service; no college money has gone to pay the phone company. ACC is not more expensive than the local phone company; both are regulated by the state, and ACC actually offers "competitive rates."

Some students expressed concern with their inability to call 911 from hall phones. The solution offered for this complaint was to dial campus safety at extension 5424, or the Emergency

Medical Technician hotline at 5555.

DEAN OF STUDENTS SEARCH

Debra Martin then led a discussion on the search for a new Dean of Students. She stated that the school is in the process of looking at applications, and that this process is open to student involvement.

When asked what the position entails, Martin replied that the Dean was to be an advocate for students in administrative votes, a supervisor of housing staff, and a participant in community council processes, promoting college ideals. Protection of the interests of the entire community is the central job of the Dean.

FINANCIAL AID

Changes in financial aid were the next order of business. No changes in federal funds or the college's own financial aid budget will occur. The alterations are matters of process: direct lending will be in place in the 1996-1997 year, and a two-step process profile, for which students will have to apply, is to replace the FAF form. This year's delay in the FAFSA form was mentioned, but will not affect the aid application process. All forms must be back to the financial aid office by June 1.

GREG PRINCE SPEAKS

Hampshire College is "very healthy," becoming "appreci-

ated" by the outside world, and still "standing for what it should stand for," according to President Greg Prince, who spoke next. Prince primarily talked about financial issues, telling the amassed crowd that though the college is currently running on a \$300,000-\$400,000 deficit, this is not unusual for an institution of higher education and is no cause for alarm. However, he expressed concern with the lack of financial aid growth and lessened investment in the institution that paying off interest on the debt entails. He also mentioned that some budget cuts will be made for the next year, though in which department they are to be is not yet certain.

Prince's tone became less confident only when speaking of "external" threats to the college. He voiced concern that the atmosphere in the Washington DC is "very disturbing" and "not conducive to what we believe education should be." Apparently he and other key Hampshire figures have been to Washington to lobby for education during the past year, and met with serious obstacles.

Along the way, Prince "plugged" the up-and-coming Radical Departure movement, saying proudly that the students involved are "probing and pushing what Hampshire's really about." He also advocated greater student involvement in the Community Council.

Continued on the next page.

More All-Community Free-For-All

Continued from the previous page.

COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Unsurprisingly, when Lorenzo Gaines began his section of the meeting, he was prompted to give a brief description of what Community Council is and what it does, as if he were not a leader of Hampshire's student governance but instead as if he headed some obscure student club. Apparently student recognition of community council is alarmingly low; when surveys were sent out to probe interest in discussion topics for the meeting, only 10% were returned. Even worse, only 10-12% of the community voted in the last election of council members.

Despite such problems, council members still devote two hours a week to manning the Community Council office, which is in the Airport Lounge. Meetings are held every other Tuesday at 2:30, and various subcommittees are appointed to deal with specific issues.

There was a brief skirmish between council members and certain students present as FiComm, the financial committee of the community council, was introduced to the discussion. FiComm meets at 11:00 AM on Fridays, and allocates funds for student organizations. Some student coordinators in the audience, confused about the state of their allotted funds, hounded Gaines until placated by promises that the problem could be

dealt with if they would speak specifically to FiComm staff.

Another council subcommittee is currently handling a special project. In conjunction with the house offices in each "neighborhood" (Merrill, Dakin, Greenwich, Enfield, and Prescott), Community Council is making an extra effort to counsel students who have had difficulties and have considered leaving the school. Retaining 30 such students, said Gaines, would actually save the college money.

The issue consuming most of the Community Council's time at the moment is the new school constitution, which will be instituted on April 24th. This document has been three years in the making and will be submitted to the faculty and the board of trustees for approval. The constitution will not be ratified by the student body at large before it is passed. Preliminary versions of the Constitution can be found in the library, on the Community Council homepage, and earlier issues of the *Omen*.

PUBLIC SAFETY

The role of campus safety personnel was one of the final topics of discussion. Derrick Elmes, Director of Public Safety and Environmental Health, spent most of his time vigorously attempting to defend his department, which he said is a "community based department to keep the community safe."

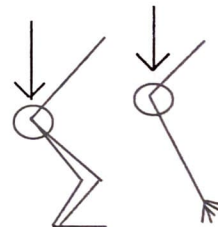
Despite gibes from a handful on students who seemed in-

tent on exposing Elmes' officers as evil minions of The Man who raid rooms without cause, "sell out" students who peacefully protest anti-drug laws in their own special ways, search students' computer files, and generally violate all constitutional protections, Elmes pleaded that his department "can't insulate (students)... from the laws of the land," and that there is "pressure on the institution" and the officers themselves, who are under oath, to enforce these laws. "If we have illegal behavior going on we can't hide it," stated Elmes.

He maintained that room searches are legal in case of emergency, or when there is "probable cause to believe" that laws are being violated. Public Safety usually hands such cases over to the Amherst Police Department, however, because it is "cleaner" for Hampshire to do so.

Gillian Andrews

My Ass, My Elbow
Jonathan Land,
1996



SECTION HATE

I Fought The Law, And The Law Was

Section Hate - 01 April, 1996

Author's note - This is a letter I wrote for the Community Review Board meeting that convened on 29 March, 1996 to hear the case of Alex Georges. About four weeks ago, I made my opinions known about the case in one of my articles - I thought he should be suspended.

Apparently, this made a lot of people hate me. That's fine - I can deal with that. But some people - including some good friends - thought that I was being extremely unfair, and made some damn good arguments to that effect. The long and short of it is that I have...ahem, changed my opinions about the matter. It was a tough thing to do. I like to consider myself open-minded, but I also cling rather tenaciously to my opinions once I form them. Plus, the added tension of having these particular opinions out in the public sphere (at least in terms of

Hampshire) weighed on my mind. But I *did* change my mind. And I have the courage to admit that I was wrong, in the space where I most vociferously proclaim that I am right. If you don't like it - fine. I can't do anything about that. But I'm sick to death

of hearing through the grapevine that people hate my articles. If you have a beef with me, stop being a fucking coward and respond. I don't care if it's by email, regular mail or through The Omen. C'mon - I'm fairly begging to be slammed here. What've you got to lose? Box 21 or jobF92@hamp, sparky.

Happy reading.

28 March, 1996

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to this body to make my feelings known about the case of one Alexander Georges, which is being reviewed today. Since I cannot attend the meeting of this body in person due to prior commitments, I have prepared this written statement. Please regard this statement as mine, and mine only, representative of only my opinions.

This statement was not solicited. I am writing today out of my own initiative.

It has been brought to my attention in recent days that the article I wrote in the Hampshire College publication, The Omen, concerning the case of Mr. Georges (Volume VII, Issue 6, March 6, 1996) has caused some-

Kooky

what of furor among sections of the student body. Many students have talked to me about what they perceive as the unfairness of my opinions concerning what the fate of Mr. Georges should be.

Specifically, those opinions were an advocacy of suspension for Mr. Georges for a full year. This is, as I understand it, what the Dean of Students office has recommended as Mr. Georges' punishment to this body.

There also appears to have been some confusion regarding my opinions in this case. In the aforementioned article, I wrote that, upon first learning of the case and the sketchy details I had at the time, I advocated expulsion for Mr. Georges. I then went on to write in this article that I had, upon further reflection, softened my position, and thought that expulsion was too severe a punishment for the Administration to dole out, although within Hampshire College's legal purview.

Apparently, some people, after reading my article, think that I do, indeed, advocate expulsion for Mr. Georges. Let me say now, emphatically and without

Continued on the next page.

More On The Trial Of The Century

Continued from the previous page.

any doubt, that I do NOT advocate expulsion for Mr. Georges, and that I think this body would be remiss in its duties if it were to recommend expulsion.

And yet, as many people have argued to me, a punishment of suspension for a year might just be the same thing, couched in kinder words. These same people have also asked me how I can, in good conscience, support such an act. I do realize that, if Mr. Georges were to be suspended, this would be tantamount to expulsion, inasmuch that Mr. Georges would most likely be denied financial aid upon his return because of the circumstances of his forced leave. As I understand it, this would make it impossible for Mr. Georges to return, as he is one of the dwindling number of Hampshire College students who cannot attend this expensive institution without massive amounts of aid. I realized this when I first wrote my article, but I still thought that suspension was an appropriate punishment. I have now been given pause by the undeniably reasoned arguments of the supporters of Mr. Georges, and have been forced to seriously think about the validity of my opinions.

There has been a battle waging in my head that pits my belief that justice is blind against my belief that justice CANNOT be blind and still call itself jus-

tice. Is it right to dash a last-semester Division III student's academic career because of a brilliantly stupid and thoughtless act? Is it right to say that it does not matter that Mr. Georges had no malicious intent behind his prank? Is it just to argue that the fact that Mr. Georges act was an impromptu prank bears no weight in this case? Is it fair to make Mr. Georges an example?

I have deliberated on these questions at much length, and must say that the answer to all of them is an unequivocal "No."

I want to make it very clear that this reversal of my opinion is not the result of pressure on the part of any other student; rather, this reversal comes from serious reflection on my part. I can no longer, in good conscience, support or advocate suspension for Mr. Georges. Justice cannot be blind, especially in such a small community. This body, and the Administration in general, has not only the option but the duty to consider ALL factors when deciding any case. This is something that, as a general rule, does not happen, in my opinion.

I am aware of my status as a voice of opinion on this campus. As the editor of the so-called "Section Hate", or commentary section, of The Omen, I am in a position to influence opinion on this campus. Like it or not, I do not write in a vacuum, and I must be responsible for the opinions I espouse. That is partly why I am writing this statement. I do not want to be a part of what I now

consider would be a most egregious wrong. I do not want, in any way, to be a part of Mr. Georges suspension - should it come to that. I sincerely hope it does not.

I must also say again that I cannot, and will not, be used as a pawn or an example for either side in this case. This reversal of opinion is sincere and not a political ploy. I do this under my own recognizance, and no one else's.

In closing, I implore this body to not administer justice blindly. That is not justice. There are other options for the punishment of Alexander Georges. It has been suggested that large amounts of community service would be a fair, reasonable and just punishment for Mr. Georges' actions. I believe this to be so. Perhaps, as well, monetary reparations on the part of Mr. Georges to Hampshire College and the Town of Amherst would also be reasonable. But suspension, I now firmly believe, is tantamount to expulsion in the case of Mr. Georges, and that, frankly, is unacceptable.

Once again, I implore you to act in a fair and just manner, in not only this case but all cases. Please remember that justice cannot be blind in an equitable society.

Sincerely,

Joshua Brassard
Commentary (Section Hate)
Editor
The Hampshire Omen

A Generation-X ABCs

Thoughts After Midnight

A is for Anything
'cause that's what goes

B is for Body piercing
ears, lips, and nose

C is for Counterculture
which you buy at the mall

D is for Divorced
like my parents and all

E is for Ennui
my favorite sport

F is for Feminism
always quick to retort

G is for Generation;
mine isn't so great

H is for Hedonist
who's priorities are straight

I is for Information
(superhighway, I mean)

J is for Jackpot
of which I dream

K is for Kerouac
a cool cat with hard fists

L is for Love
(if it really exists)

M is for Me
working minimum wage

N is for Nietzsche

a short German, full of rage

O is for Opportunity
which seldom knocks once

P is for Punk
and not bathing for months

Q is for Queen
often found in discos

R is for Raver
wearing much-too-big
clothes

S is for Sex
with your gender of choice

T is for Television
also known as God's Voice

U is for Uberrnensch
which nobody knows

V is for Victim
we're all one of those

W is for Womyn
standing strong, hand in
hand

X is for XTC
(the drug and the band)

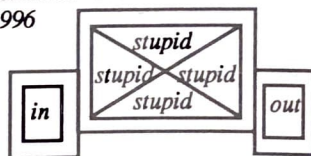
Y is for You-
and that's all you get

and **Z** is for Zoloft
which is my safest bet

Los Angeles, California

Matthew Flaming

Stupidity Machine
Jonathan Land
1996



More Public Safety

Continued from page 5.

little to excite change within
the status quo.

Unlike most complainants, however, Zerby offered solutions for the problems he perceives. He feels that by involving Staff in the budget process, and allowing them to be privy to the justifications behind said process, the Staff would view the Hampshire system "with a mixture of self-interest and common interest." Speculation, a phenomenon that would under cut what Romney detailed as the "Staff rumor mill," would be replaced with understanding. Without this change to the system, he sees Unionization of all staff as inevitable. And for now, the college will continue to proffer "inadequate" efforts to squelch the complaints of the Staff.

Stephanie Cole
News Editor

*More installments of The
Public Safety Unionization Saga
will be in future issues.*